

Washington, DC - Congressman Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) today helped pass a bill in the House to increase funding for the "cash for clunkers" program. The initial launch of the program has been so successful in encouraging Americans to trade in their old gas guzzlers for new fuel-efficient cars, that funding ran out and Congress is acting quickly to extend it.

The program allows consumers to trade in their old, gas-guzzling cars for vouchers worth up to \$4,500 to help pay for new, more fuel-efficient vehicles. Almost 200,000 cars have already been bought through the program, and it is expected to spur the sale of up to 800,000 more fuel-efficient cars and trucks, while stimulating the ailing auto industry and reducing the country's dependence on foreign oil.

"This bill will help get the least fuel efficient vehicles off our roadways and replace them with new, more fuel efficient models that will help boost the economy, reduce pollution, and reduce our country's dependence on foreign oil," Hinchey said. "This bill will also help Americans save money at the pump since they'll be driving more fuel efficient vehicles and won't need to fill them up as often. While I am pleased that we passed this bill, I wish it would have gone even further to require the new vehicles being purchased to be even more fuel efficient. Nevertheless, this is a step in the right direction that will give our economy a real shot in the arm."

The legislation provides rebates for cars and trucks in the following four categories:

- Passenger Cars: The old vehicle must get 18 mpg or less. New vehicles with improvement of at least 4 mpg will get a \$3,500 voucher. New vehicles with improvement of at least 10 mpg will get a \$4,500 voucher.
- Light-Duty Trucks: The old vehicle must get 18 mpg or less. New vehicles with improvement of at least 2 mpg will get a \$3,500 voucher. New vehicles with improvement of at least 5 mpg will get a \$4,500 voucher.
- Large light-Duty Trucks: The old vehicle must get 15 mpg or less. New vehicles with improvement of at least 1 mpg will get a \$3,500 voucher or trade-in of a "work truck." New vehicles with improvement of at least 2 mpg will get a \$4,500 voucher.

- Work Trucks: The old vehicle must be a pre-2002 model. New vehicles in the same or smaller weight class will get a \$3,500 voucher.

Hinchey said he will continue to work with his House colleagues to identify ways to strengthen the requirements of the bill moving forward so that it encourages the purchase of even more fuel efficient vehicles. He supports lifting the cap on a separate measure that provides federal tax credits for the purchase of hybrids and other super-efficient vehicles. Currently, there is a limit as to how many Americans can claim the tax credit and that limit has been reached in many cases. The congressman wants to increase the number of tax credits for those who purchase the most fuel efficient types of vehicles.